

Amendments to the Claims

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-3. (canceled)

Claim 4. (currently amended) ~~The safety needle of claim 3~~ A safety needle comprising:

a needle with a sharp end; and

a needle shield comprising:

collapsible interlocking members, wherein one member is an end member with a hole surrounding the needle;

a spring inside the collapsible interlocking members that applies an expanding force on the collapsible interlocking members;

a releasable latch structure that retains the collapsible interlocking members in a collapsed state, wherein when the releasable latch structure is actuated the collapsible interlocking members expand and enclose the sharp end of the needle; and

a closing structure, including a slide cap that includes a hole and, wherein the slide cap includes a tubular structure engaging the spring and includes a sloped end that engages a ramp on the inside of the end member, that prevents the sharp end of the needle from exiting the hole after the collapsible interlocking members encloses the sharp end of the needle.

Claims 5-21. (canceled)

Claim 22. (currently amended) ~~The safety needle of claim 21,~~ A safety needle comprising:

a needle with a sharp end and a base;

and a needle shield comprising:

a member with a hole surrounding the needle;

a spring inside the member that applies an expanding force on the member;

a retaining structure that retains the member near the base of the needle, wherein  
when the retaining structure is actuated the spring expands and encloses the sharp end of the  
needle with the member; and

a closing structure that prevents the sharp end of the needle from exiting the hole  
after the member encloses the sharp end of the needle, wherein the closing structure includes a  
slide cap with a hole ~~wherein the slide cap includes~~ and a tubular structure engaging the spring  
and includes a sloped end that engages a ramp on the inside of the end member.

Claims 23-40. (canceled)